

Dear Mr. Beorkrem:

Thank you for your attendance at the public meeting of the Mississippi River Commission on August 15, 2001, in Keokuk, Iowa.

The varied missions of the Corps of Engineers reflect the public interest as determined and authorized by Congress. The Civil Works mission of the Corps includes navigation, environmental restoration, flood protection, and recreation. Generally, our greatest challenge is the equitable balancing of these missions among the diverse interests of the citizens of the upper Mississippi Valley.

The Corps shares your enthusiasm about creating a new vision for our nation's water resources. Last year the Corps invited Americans to "Join the Dialogue," an action which provided people the opportunity to voice concerns about water resources and future sustainability.

The Corps has implemented partnering programs that allow us to interact with other State and Federal agencies to develop the best possible alternatives for our waterway projects. For example, the Illinois River Ecosystem Restoration Study is being conducted under the authority of Section 216 of the Flood Control Act of 1970 in partnership with the State of Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

The Upper Mississippi River System-Environmental Management Program is another example of a Federal-State partnership to monitor the natural resources of the river system. Likewise, the Upper Mississippi River-Illinois Waterway System Navigation Study has provided a model of Federal-State partnership and public involvement in a major study process. The Corps continues its long-standing tradition of partnering with all interests to assure that its mission is implemented to serve the public interest.

I hope that you will continue to be involved in Mississippi River Commission issues and that together all partners can seek the best balance of the use of the rivers for the public good. Thank you again for your comments, and we look forward to hearing from you at our future meetings.

Sincerely,

Edwin J. Arnold, Jr.  
Brigadier General, U.S. Army  
President Designee,

Mississippi

River Commission